

state of Tennessee. As county executive, his door is always open, and his card reads, "It's a pleasure to serve you." One peek around his office and it's evident that his blood runs orange because he is an avid University of Tennessee football fan.

The people of Sumner County could not have asked for a better public servant. His leadership and work ethic will be sorely missed. I cordially congratulate Tommy on his distinguished career as a public servant and wish him and his wife, Nancy, well in their future endeavors.

IN HONOR OF THE HAMTRAMCK
FIREFIGHTERS AND THE 5TH AN-
NUAL ST. FLORIAN MARCH

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 21, 2002

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, as members of the Hamtramck Firefighters gathered together to celebrate the patron saint of firefighters, St. Florian, they celebrated a feast day cherished by firefighters everywhere. Honoring the patron saint of firefighters, brewers, chimney-sweeps and others, St. Florian is remembered in the Catholic tradition for many miracles, including the extinguishing of a huge fire with a pitcher of water and stopping a town from burning by throwing a single bucket of water on the blaze. Celebrating their fifth consecutive march on Saturday, May 4, 2002, the Hamtramck Firefighters continued the tradition of celebrating and honoring the miracles of St. Florian.

As the city of Hamtramck, Michigan is home to the St. Florian Catholic Church, each year the Hamtramck Firefighters celebrate this feast day by marching from the Hamtramck Firehouse to the St. Florian church for a special celebration of mass. Inviting departments from across the state of Michigan and Ontario, Canada, communities everywhere choose this day to recognize their firefighters and the countless contributions they have made to their communities.

Our great state of Michigan is home to patriotic citizens who give so much to this country everyday. This year is no exception for the Hamtramck Firefighters, who continue to stand together ready to offer relief and assistance to fellow Americans in this time of greatest need. The Hamtramck Firefighters have also chosen this day to celebrate the unity and brotherhood of firefighters, a brotherhood that reaches far beyond religious and ethnic barriers. Their actions reflect the unity and strength of Americans.

Firefighters are an integral part of every community in this nation. As the Hamtramck Firefighters and firefighters everywhere celebrate the holiday commemorating St. Florian, we join them in their tribute and honor the contributions firefighters have made to our great country.

JOBS FOR VETERANS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 20, 2002

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4015, the Jobs for Veterans Act. This bill would provide funds for a new performance incentive awards program to encourage employment, training, and placement programs for veterans. This incentive program would reward those states that excel in aiding our veterans. It would also provide awards to states that made significant progress in this area, even if they were not among the highest performers. The awards would take the form of new contracts for veterans employment programs.

Furthermore, It authorizes \$1 million for a Labor Department study of the economic benefit to the United States attributable to providing employment and training services to veterans.

Mr. Speaker, we have all seen the stories of those who have lost their lives so we can live ours. The tragic events of September 11th and the ensuing War on Terror that our brave armed forces are currently fighting should inspire this body to secure the future of our armed forces.

Job training is of paramount importance to our veterans. We ought to provide them with adequate resources so that they may succeed in their future endeavors.

HONORING THE DISTINGUISHED
PUBLIC SERVICE OF DOYLE
GAINES

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 21, 2002

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding public service of a good friend of mine, Doyle Gaines. Doyle is retiring as the Macon County executive at the end of his current term, which ends on August 31.

Before being elected as the county executive in 1990, he was the Macon County school superintendent for 16 years and spent more than 38 years in the education field as a teacher, coach and administrator. During his impressive career, Doyle received numerous awards and honors for his commitment and leadership.

He has always been an active member of the community, serving on various civic boards and organizations. Doyle's leadership was also instrumental in forming the Cordell Hull Economic Opportunity Corporation, a regional agency in Tennessee dedicated to fighting poverty by helping people be self-sufficient.

Always striving to be well informed and at the forefront of creative initiatives, Doyle has served his community, state and nation with distinction. The people of Macon County and the mid-state region could not have asked for a better public servant. His leadership and work ethic will be sorely missed by the Macon County government. I cordially congratulate

Doyle on his distinguished career as a public servant and wish him well in future endeavors.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AF-
FAIRS EMERGENCY PREPARED-
NESS RESEARCH, EDUCATION,
AND BIOTERRORISM PREVEN-
TION ACT OF 2002

SPEECH OF

HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 20, 2002

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, the events of September 11th and the subsequent anthrax attacks have forced us as a country to reevaluate our ability to respond to chemical, biological, and radiological contingencies. As a member of the House Veterans Affairs Committee (HVAC) Subcommittee on Health, I participated in a hearing to assess the readiness of the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) to be a third line responder in the event of a threat of this sort. The news was not good. This is why I am an original co-sponsor of HR 3253, the Emergency Preparedness Research, Education, and Bio-Terrorism Prevention Act of 2002. Through the establishment of National Medical Emergency Preparedness Centers, we would enhance the work that the DVA is already engaged in, and strengthen our national homeland defense efforts.

In recognizing that the DVA is the nation's largest health care system and engages in some of the most promising research, and provides first-rate medical training and education should signal to us all that herein lies an opportunity. Considering all that the DVA already does successfully, I see no reason why they cannot be positioned as a first responder in the event of a biological or chemical attack. With the proper allocation of resources and support, those provided by the passage of HR 3253, many DVA medical centers will be well positioned to provide our country with the necessary support in these crisis situations.

In my district, the 28th Congressional District of Texas, the South Texas Veterans Health Care System, Audie L. Murphy Division, already engages in shared teaching and research arrangements with medical schools and has been able to attract several high-level scientists in fields relevant to bio-chemical and radiological threats. This facility is among the top ten research and development facilities within the DVA and is a tribute to the rewards of collaborative research efforts like those suggested by this legislation.

I am excited about the prospect of National Emergency Preparedness Centers, which would not only engage in research to develop methods of detection, inoculation, and treatment, but also coordinate research with universities and federal agencies in the dissemination of the latest information to healthcare workers at public and private hospitals across the country.

Through the passage and enactment of this measure the DVA will become a key partner in our nation's homeland defense efforts.